

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, 24, 26, 28, 29 and 31 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 28-29 and 31 are amended. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner Rickman at the interview held July 19, 2004, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

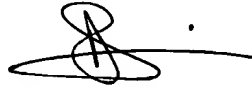
The Office Action rejects claims 1-13, 24, 26, 28-29 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Umeda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,645,646). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As discussed during the personal interview, Umeda does not disclose, suggest or render obvious the magnetic recording medium that includes at least a ferromagnetic atom rich layer formed on the cobalt alloy containing more than 64% to not more than 83% of cobalt wherein the exchange coupling energy at 83% is about five times the exchange coupling energy at 64%, as recited in independent claims 1, 28-29 and 31. Support for this limitation can be found, for instance, on paragraph [0095] of Applicants' specification. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of the claims be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-13, 24, 26, 28-29 and 31 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: August 3, 2004

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